Boston, Sunday Evening –
October 31. 1847.

My dear Mr. Estlin,

I should not commence a letter to you now – short, imperfect and unsatisfactory as it must of necessity be – if it were not to inform you of the safe return of Mr. Garrison to Boston – to his home & friends. This earliest information is due to your warm & generous friendship both towards him & myself, and most gratefully & gladly, on every account, do I discharge the office. I know you have felt anxious, as we have, on his account, and have perused your Liberalor, for some weeks past, with fears for him. But he is again in Boston, having arrived here last Thursday evening, making the journey from Cleveland, Ohio, of full 700 miles, in just a week, resting at night (of course), and 2 entire days besides. He bore the journey unexpectedly well, gaining strength on the way. But he is still weak, and is very much emaciated. The fever must have been a terrible one. For 5 weeks he did not leave his room, and the first time he rode out was only 3 days before he started

for home.— the first 200 mls. (or nearly that) were over Lake Erie, and I believe he had a quiet & smooth time. That lake is comparatively shallow, and easily ruffled by the winds, and subject to violent storms. Henry C. Wright accompanied him home. You will see, in Liberator of Oct. 29., a letter from him addressed to Elizabeth Peabody of Darlington giving an account of G.'s illness.— We fear now that he will be too eager to get to work again. Under the most favorable circumstances, he ought not to touch the Liberator in less than a month; and we shall keep him from it, if we possibly can. You will rejoice with us, I know well, in his restoration and his return. May we not be thankless, for such great favours.

Instead of finding more time, in my Agency, for correspondence with you and other friends, at home & abroad, as I had hoped, I have very much less. I never had so little time at my own disposal as now. In addition to the Correspondence, lecturing, preaching, arranging & attending meetings, &c. &c. which my 'agency' requires, since August 1st, I have had more or less work to do, almost every day, for the Liberator. Over 100 news-papers a week (sometimes nearly 125) have

to be examined, and a variety of small paragraphs written, proofs corrected, copy examined, and the like, - all which put together takes up time. - Accordingly, I have not attended to some requests of yours as I had hoped & certainly expected to do; but I don't mean to forget them, I assure you.

Did you notice in recent Liberators some short articles on a meeting recently held in Bridgewater, Plymouth Co. (in this State), where the use of the Town Hall was granted to us on Saturday, but refused on Sunday? A remark of mine, in the first notice, roused the ire of the Swedenborgian minister of that town, and he sent a rather crusty letter to our office, peremptorily requiring us to say we had been misinformed about him. This I was far from being prepared to do, and it was decided to publish (though 'not written for publication') his letter, that he might state his own case; - according to the Liberator rule of letting every man speak for himself. He suspected that his letter ~~would~~ was to be published, and came post haste to Boston to prevent it, if he could. I was, at the time, in Leicester; so he waited a day to see Mr. Quincy. He declined to interfere in the matter. So the gentleman left a note for me, rather curtly saying he did not wish to

have his letter published, and requesting me not to publish it. When I returned to B, and received his note, it was too late to suppress the letter, had I been inclined to do so. But it is not probable that I should have been so inclined. — The man, as I was informed, seemed to have the uttermost dread of exposure — and especially in the columns of the Liberator! But he deserved the punishment of exposure. Still I had no suspicion, when I gave his letter to be printed, that he would make any objection thereto. He seemed so entirely satisfied with his own course in the premises, so well convinced that he had followed the line of duty, that it did not occur to me that he was not willing the whole world should know his heroic conduct.

I have seen Frederic Douglas this evening, as also repeatedly before within a few weeks past. He bore his Western tour, the labor of speaking & travelling, and the exposure to wet weather & changes of temperature better than Mr. Garrison did. He has finally determined to establish a paper of his own, and to give himself to the work of editing it. He has selected Rochester, New York, instead of Cleveland, Ohio, (as at first) as the place of publication. He has made his purchases of press, type, & other printing materials, and tomorrow morning

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takes his departure for Rochester himself. He has engaged several persons to assist him in the editorial & pecuniary affairs of the paper, & appears quite confident of success. I wish him all success, and shall do what little I can to aid him; but I have strong fears that he will involve himself in pecuniary embarrassment before long. He has no experience in editing, nor in business affairs. Garrison feels badly that F. Douglas never consulted him about the matter, during all their journey together in Pennsylvania & Ohio. F. D. went to see him yesterday, & had a long conversation with him; but I know not what the result was in G.'s mind. If his paper fails, it will be a great mortification to him, and injury too. If it succeeds, I fear it will be at the expense of serious injury to the "Antislavery Standard" and to the "Antislavery Bugle", published at Salem, Ohio.

The Unitarians have recently held their Autumnal Convention at Salem in this State. It was very largely attended, was quite spirited, and rather trenchant than otherwise on the kingdom of the devil. The abettors of the do-nothing policy kept very still, as I was informed by several gentlemen (for I did not myself attend the Convention) and the more active, & those disposed to progress (as the term is), had the field very much to themselves. Still a resolution, brought forward by Rev. James F. Clarke, proposing that the Convention

should adopt, and send to Congress, a Memorial against the War with Mexico, & calling for the immediate withdrawal of the American troops, ~~[illegible]~~ was not entertained, on account, as was alleged, of the lateness of the hour at which it was brought forward. Dr. Gannett strenuously opposed it, on this ground among others. Arrangements were however made to call a meeting in Boston in furtherance of this object. A meeting was held last Thursday, and a Committee of 15 gentlemen, ministers & laymen, appointed to draft a Memorial and obtain Signatures. This Comittee met yesterday P.M. at Dr. Gannett's study - (for after some solicitation, and modifying one of the resolutions adopted, Dr. G. was induced to serve on Comitee) - and, after 2 hours' talk on the whole matter, appointed a Sub-Comitee of 3, Wm. H. Channing, Chas. Sumner Esq., & James F. Clarke, to draw up the Memorial. It will certainly be a good one. I hope it will not be reduced to something very near non-entity in coming before the whole Committee. I fear the same disposition, to accommodate Dr. Gannett, will appear again & carry the Committee too far. There are enough to prevent it, if they will but speak and act. I trust some good will come of it all.

In a late letter of Edward Search (Mr. Ashurst) to the Liberator, was included a copy of your "Reply to the Boston Invitation" - that of which you sent me a copy by Mr. Hicks,

but which I have scrupulously abstained from showing, preferring that the Original should tell its own story first. But it is out, now. I hope we shall have the original soon. I am 'monstrous curious' to know what effect it will produce on Dr. Parkman, & those of his kidney — So particular as he was, to leave every thing out of the Invitation which c^d possibly give any offence; — I believe I wrote you, in my letter by Oct. 1st ship, what the D. was ever heard to say in a Railroad Car on this matter, conjoined with the compliment to myself that "Rev. Mr. May of Boston was the cause of all the difficulty between the Amer". & British Unitarians". — "Am I therefore become an enemy to the Am^n. Unit^ns., by telling the truth to them, & of them?" And I do not learn that Dr. Parkman calls in question the truth of what I affirmed about him.

The Rev. Mr. Hincks has taken lodgings in Cambridge; — 3 a 4 ms. from Boston only to be sure, — but I have been thereby prevented from seeing him, as much as I wished, and as I should doubtless have done, had he continued in Boston. He attended the Salem Convention, and made some remarks there, expressing his sense of the value of association for religious objects, and expressing the hearty good will and sympathy felt by British for American Unitarians.

Nov. 1.th

Have you yet heard anything of Rev. John Parkman Jr. of Dover, N.H.? I know not in what part of Europe he now is, but I think it was his intention to be in England before this time. If he is long in England, I am pretty sure he will visit Bristol. I should like to have you see him, and particularly wish to have him see you all.

Yesterday (Sunday) Mr. Garrison both walked and rode out, and says (I am told) that he gains strength every day; and almost every hour can perceive amendment.

Please remember me, most warmly & respectfully to Mr. Armstrong and to Mr. Sanders. I seem to hear & know less of the English Unitarians, or rather of their late doings, for the Inquirer comes very irregularly. Formerly it never missed coming by every Steamship. Now, sometimes no paper come at all, and then by the next vessel we have 4 or 5.

You have probably noticed the fact of our having in Boston Sixty Six emancipated Slaves, recently the property of Carter H. Edloe, near Richmond, Va. Most of the facts have been detailed in the Liberator. It has fallen very much to me to find places for them, i.e for those who wished to go into the country, upon farms I have secured good places for quite a number of them. Mr. Edloe was a Slaveholder of a different stamp from the most; a pretty easy, good-natured man, I suspect. Besides freeing these 66, he gave freedom to his Slave Harriet Barbour, and her 4 children (his own, also), leaving them $8000. besides! A part of this they have already received, and have all gone to Philadelphia, to live. This Harriet — Sister Harriet all the Slaves call her — was the only wife he had, and she of course not legally such, and with her he lived on perfectly good & pleasant terms, so far as I can learn. The Slaves say they had a much easier time while he was alive than afterwards. 'Tis near 4 years since he died. Ever Yours, S. May Jr.

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